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CIA: The Inside Story

By Andrew Tully

CHAPTER II

This is the 2d of 12 installments condensed from Andrew Tully's controversial new book, "CIA: The Inside Story." Whether Mr. Tully's report on the super-secret Central Intelligence Agency comes uncomfortably close to the truth—or represents a "mish-mash of misinformation," as some critics have said—who can tell? It makes exciting reading. Here it is.

MOST Americans find spying distasteful, if not immoral. As a nation we are not old enough to have acquired the detached viewpoint of, say, the British, who have lived with espionage for so many centuries that they are able to keep it locked up in a special closet reserved for things "one doesn't think about" or discuss with the neighbors.

And so, in the furor that has enveloped CIA in recent months, some Americans have awakened to wonder what the CIA is all about and where it came from, and—especially after the Cuban disaster of April, 1961—if CIA is worth the tariff it imposes on the citizen's pocketbook.

Respectable or not, espionage is almost as old as man himself and over the centuries it has been a valuable instrument in the hands of military leaders and ambitious rulers.

It is reasonable to explain the birth of the Central Intelligence Agency in simple terms. CIA exists because of Pearl Harbor.

Investigation revealed there had been ample warning that the Japanese were up to something, reams of information picked up here and there that should have alerted Army and Navy commanders in the Pacific that we were in danger.

But for the most part this intelligence, gathered by military informants, had lain unused because there was no single, central organization equipped to analyze it and see to its speedy dispatch to those concerned.

In the crisis of war, Franklin D. Roosevelt created the country's first national spy agency, the Office of Strategic Services, but after the war the OSS was abolished by Harry S. Truman, largely because it was unwanted by the Government lobbyists around him.

But whatever its fault, OSS at least had been a central point from which intelligence would be transmitted to the White House. Shortly after Harry Truman abolished it, he discovered that the conflicting intelligence reports flowing across his desk left him confused and irritable—and monumentally u n i n f o r m e d. Characteristically, he announced one morning that he wanted, as soon as possible, "somebody, some outfit, that can make sense out of all this stuff."

Truman sat down on Jan. 22, 1946, and dictated identical letters to Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson, Secretary of the Navy James V. Forestal, and his military adviser, Admiral William D. Leahy. These men were instructed by the President to constitute themselves as the "National Intelligence Authority," which was to plan, develop and co-ordinate "all Federal foreign intelligence activities."

Shortly, members of the authority assigned personnel [illegible] covering nine acres. From north to south, the building extends a maximum of 800 feet, and the depth including a cafeteria, goes 475 feet.

This Taj Mahal of bureaucratic architecture cost the taxpayers a little more than $46 million dollars, but it still is not large enough to house all of CIA's employes in Washington. The number of employes is a secret, but most estimates put it as around 17,000, which is almost as many as the total in the State Department.

At the Langley headquarters any person may drive thru the gates, even tho he be a well-known member of the Soviet Embassy spy apparatus. But the security line is drawn as the visitor crosses the threshold to the huge building. There armed guards take over, ask the visitor's business and require him to write down on a special form [illegible] address and [illegible] and the name of the [illegible] he has come to see. A personal escort then takes [illegible] escorted and, when his business is done, the escort walks him back to the guard at the entrance.

The case of the bent coat hanger is a prime example of the kind of research and dogged persistence that pays off in the end at the Washington headquarters of the CIA. This research job was successful because somebody working for CIA at an airport in Vienna was interested in trash.

A Russian commercial Aeroflot liner had just landed, and the ground crew went aboard to clean up the plane for its return flight. As the plane was being spruced up, a man in a dark suit approached the airport garbage concessionaire and slipped him a bill.

Shortly thereafter the concessionaire picked up the trash from the Soviet plane, loaded it into his truck and hauled it to his station. There the man in the dark blue suit turned up to claim the box in which the Soviet litter had been dumped. He put the box in the back seat of his car and drove home. Then, with the door locked, he went thru the trash: torn magazines, paper napkins, an empty bottle, a crust from a sandwich, a broken plate—and a bent coat hanger.

The man wrapped the coat hanger carefully in brown paper, tied it with a strong cord and walked over to a railroad station. There he deposited his package in a locker. It was picked up by another man a few hours later.

In Washington, a few days later, the coat hanger was sent along to one of the little offices off a wide corridor at CIA headquarters. The men who signed a receipt for it were delighted. They had been working for months to put together information on a new Soviet long-range bomber. They had found out a number of things about the plane, but had been unable to get anything on its range or bomb load. They did know, however, that shavings from the machinings of the wing were remelted and used to make a special kind of coat hanger.

This, at last, was the coat hanger. By spectroanalysis and chemical tests, experts were able to learn the kind of metal alloy used to make the hanger. With that formula at hand, CIA knew what the bomber wing was made of, and from there it took only a few more steps to figure out both the range and the bomb load of that particular plane.

"It doesn't matter who takes Allen's place at CIA," a friend remarked during the [illegible] over the Cuban invasion fiasco in April, 1961. "He's given CIA his imprint. It will be a long time before CIA will be anything but Allen Dulles' baby."

[illegible] which is considerable and which always places a visitor at his ease.

After the failure of the Cuban invasion, however, Mr. Dulles came under heavy fire and there were reports that he would be dismissed. By early July a White House spokesman reported that he would retire [illegible] in a month —the hunt is on for a successor.

When President Kennedy [illegible] Mr. Dulles in November, 1960, however, Mr. Dulles had [illegible] that he did not want to stay on for long; that [illegible] he did want to see CIA established in its new [illegible] in Langley.

There is every indication that Allen Dulles [illegible] has served his purpose during his [illegible] at CIA.

TOMORROW: [illegible]